



Promoting Resilience through Trauma-Informed Care: Promising Practices for Immigrants and Refugees



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Agenda

1. Setting the Scene

- Children in immigrant families
- Diversity among all immigrants

2. Expanding Trauma-Informed Care

- Immigrants and refugees: Why a special focus?
- The Model: Culturally responsive practice

3. Case Studies: Child welfare & schools

4. Small Groups: Application to your contexts

5. Take-homes & Resources



Setting the Scene

QUICK FACTS: IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES



Quick Facts: Immigrants & Refugees

Unprecedented numbers....

- Largest numbers of immigrants today in U.S. history
- Children of immigrants are the fastest growing segment of the U.S. child population
- 37% of children in NJ have at least one immigrant parent; 86% of these children are US-born (MPI, ACS 2013 data)



Quick Facts: Immigrants & Refugees

Unprecedented diversity...

- In 2014, U.S. immigrants come from more than 130 countries, largest groups from Latin America and Asia
- Refugees, relatively small proportion, came from over 80 countries, and spoke over 288 languages (*Burma = 61 languages; Somalia = 31 languages*) (MPI, 2015)



Expanding Trauma-Informed Care

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PRACTICE



Expanding Trauma-Informed Care

Immigrants and refugees: Why a special focus?

- ▶ Migration experiences
- ▶ Resettlement experiences
- ▶ Diversity of cultures and backgrounds



Migration experiences

- ▶ Reasons for migration (forced, voluntary)
- ▶ Physical/emotional trauma before, during, and after migration
- ▶ Separation from/loss of key family members
- ▶ Loss of all that is familiar... cherished roles, community, and homeland



Resettlement experiences

- ▶ Societal/community reception
- ▶ Resettlement stress
- ▶ Acculturation stress
- ▶ Discrimination
- ▶ Implications of undocumented status



Diversity of cultures and backgrounds

- ▶ Diverse backgrounds (SES, cultures, experiences)
- ▶ Languages, literacy, access to interpretation
- ▶ Deeply held cultural experiences and beliefs regarding illness, expressions of distress, healing
- ▶ Access to preventive services and treatment
- ▶ Access to legal relief, if needed



The Power of Protective Factors

Protective factors – supports and opportunities that promote healthy behaviors – are more predictive of adjustment than are risk factors

- *risk factors predict negative outcomes in 20-49% of a high risk population*
- *protective factors predict positive outcomes in 50-80% of a high-risk population (Rutter, 1987, 2000; Werner, 2001)*

Werner, E.E. and Smith, R.S. (2001). Journeys from childhood to midlife: Risk resilience and recovery. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.



Strengths

- ▶ Rebuilding supportive communities
- ▶ Sustaining cultural and religious beliefs
- ▶ Strong family cohesion
- ▶ Social and emotional skills
- ▶ Ethnic pride
- ▶ Drive to succeed
- ▶ “Immigrant optimism”

Strengths, examples

- ▶ Rebuilding supportive communities
- ▶ Sustaining cultural and religious beliefs

Question to Mixtec/Zapotec mothers:

“How did you make it through such a difficult journey to the U.S. and then through such hard times once you arrived here?”

Their response:

“Religion! It gives us strength. After we established a community here, we had our town’s saint carried over the mountains all the way from Oaxaca [to California]. Then we brought the town priest too.”



<https://casitacolibri.wordpress.com/2011/12/19/virgin-of-solitude/>

Strengths, cont'd

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- ▶ **Strong family cohesion:** Two parent families, extended family in home or nearby, “sociocentric” values
- ▶ **Social and emotional skills:** Pre-K children in immigrant families rated higher on social emotional skills
- ▶ **Ethnic pride:** Positive identity with culture supports healthy development
- ▶ **Drive to succeed:** Especially through children’s education
- ▶ **“Immigrant optimism”:** Success IS possible



connect

Cultural Assessment Framework

- ▶ Migration history and experience
- ▶ Family and cultural values & traditions, background, acculturation
- ▶ Cultural values and beliefs (regarding mental health, education, child maltreatment, etc)
- ▶ Current U.S. context (community/extended family, legal status, discrimination, etc)

Adapted from Dettlaff (2008)

Expanding Trauma-Informed Care

The Model: Culturally Responsive Practice (CRP)*

Culturally responsive practice is strengths-based practice

- ▶ **Begins with:** Critical self-awareness and cultural knowledge (migration, cultural, social contexts)
- ▶ **Builds:** Practical skills
- ▶ **Changes:** Organizations and service systems

** Bank Street's Culturally Responsive Practice Model
OPRE's Cultural Responsiveness Model*



Case Vignette

FOR DISCUSSION

Marielena

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- At age 14 Marielena left El Salvador to look for her mother, who left her with her now-ill grandmother 6 years earlier to find work in the US.
- She met other teens on the way, and a *coyote* promised to help them across the U.S. border.
- Once in the US, the *coyote* tried to force Marielena and her teenage friends into prostitution to repay him.
- Marielena was able to escape and find her mother.
- She found her mother had remarried and started a new family, and Marielena is having difficulty getting along with her stepfather and siblings.
- She is worried about her grandmother's health and her friends who could not escape, and seems withdrawn.
- In school, she is quiet and well-behaved but has difficulty concentrating, is falling behind, and is often teased by other teens for being slow.

Morland, et al (2013)



Small Group Discussion

CASE EXAMPLES

Questions for Small Groups

Use the case study provided or choose one from your own practice to discuss the following questions:

- ▶ What is your assessment of the challenges and strengths for this child and family using the Cultural Assessment Framework?
- ▶ What is your approach to working with this family based on the Culturally Responsive Practice model?
- ▶ To what degree do you currently use this approach in your work?
- ▶ What challenges/successes have you had?
- ▶ How would you change the way your agency serves immigrants and refugees?

Trauma-Informed Care & Culture Resources

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The Center for Health and Healthcare in Schools:

<http://www.healthinschools.org/Immigrant-and-Refugee-Children.aspx>

Partnering with Parents and Families to Support Immigrant and Refugee Children at School:

www.rwjf.org/files/research/partneringwithparentsandfamiliesimmigrants.pdf

Screening and Assessing Immigrant and Refugee Youth in School-Based Mental Health Programs:

<http://www.rwjf.org/files/research/3320.32211.0508issuebriefno.1.pdf>

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network:

<http://nctsnet.org/resources/topics/culture-andtrauma/resources>

The National Consortium of **Torture Treatment** Programs: <http://www.ncttp.org/>

US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) Mental Health Resources:

<http://www.refugees.org/resources/for-refugees--immigrants/health/mental-health/mental-health.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/>

Refugee Resources

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 National Center on
Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness

ECLKC Home » T/TA Resources » Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness » Refugee Families Main 

 Family and Community Engagement Health and Disabilities Program Design and Management Early Childhood Development and Learning

Refugee Families

Handbook | Ways to Use the Handbook | Handbook Tip Sheets



Cultural Backgrounders





Community Engagement and Assessment




Head Start – Refugee Resettlement Promising Practices

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/refugee-families/main-refugee-families.html>


 National Center on
Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness

ECLKC Home » T/TA Resources » Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness » Refugee Families 


 Family and Community Engagement Health and Disabilities Program Design and Management Early Childhood Development and Learning

Refugee Families


Raising Young Children in a New Country: Supporting Early Learning and Healthy Development Handbook

 **Raising Young Children in a New Country: Supporting Early Learning and Healthy Development** [PDF, 4.3MB] Available in **Arabic (العربية)** [PDF, 4.3MB] and **Spanish (español)** [PDF, 4.2MB]

This handbook provides families with information on six themes: family well-being, health and safety, healthy brain development, early learning and school readiness, guidance and discipline, and family engagement in early care and education. Programs serving refugee families, newly arrived immigrant families, and others may use this resource with parents to help ease their transition to a new country.

 **Ways to Use the Handbook** [PDF, 2MB] Available in **Arabic (العربية)** [PDF, 1.4MB] and **Spanish (español)** [PDF, 1.2MB]

Ways to Use Raising Young Children in a New Country: Supporting Early Learning and Healthy Development Handbook is a tool designed to support Head Start and Early Head Start, Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS), Refugee Resettlement staff, and other early care and education providers in using and applying concepts from the Handbook. It includes staff self-reflection activities, team planning strategies, and approaches to family engagement.

 **Handbook Tip Sheets**


Handbook Tip Sheets correspond to the themes in the Handbook and include conversation starters, cultural considerations, and additional resources for each theme.

Family Well-Being Tip Sheets: ▼

Safety and Protection Tip Sheets: ▼

Guidance and Discipline Tip Sheet: ▼

Healthy Brain Development Tip Sheet: ▼

 **U.S. Refugee Resettlement Maps and State Contacts**

This resource provides state and regional data on the arrival of refugee families and children to the United States and contact information for the Office of Refugee Resettlement by state. This information is useful for recruitment efforts and community assessments.

Indigenous Migrant Family Resources

The Mixtec, Zapotec, and Triqui: Indigenous Peoples of Oaxaca, Mexico Timeline



1500 BC
The Mixtec ancestors moved from the North into the area now incorporated by the Mexican state of Oaxaca.



1521-1527
Most of the Mixtec and Zapotec city-states were conquered by Spanish soldiers. The Zapotec leader, Cosíojeza, advised his people to not confront the Spaniards, in the hope that they could avoid the same kind of defeat suffered by the Aztecs. The Oaxaca Valley indigenous peoples continued to offer resistance to Spanish rule, however. The Zapotec, for instance, mounted resistance campaigns in 1550, 1560 and 1715. During this time, many people moved to the remote mountains for safety and to preserve their religion and traditions, creating many small towns amidst the rugged terrain. As a result, out of the 570 municipalities in Oaxaca today, 189 municipalities are indigenous.



1876-1910
Porfirio Díaz became the dictator of Mexico when he seized power through a military coup. He and his allies ruled Mexico with a heavy hand during these years known as "El Porfiriato." For some in the business community, Díaz was a hero, but for the revolutionaries that overthrew him in 1910, he was considered to be a villain and traitor to the causes of Juárez.



1858-1872
Benito Pablo Juárez García of Zapotec ancestry served as President of Mexico. Juárez led an army, comprised mostly of Zapotec warriors. From 1862 to 1867, he led national resistance to the French invasion of Mexico and eventually was able to drive the French out of the country.



1930s
Some Mixtec professionals, workers, for organization Socialist-Unionist-Taxista, to send community and a state of Oaxaca people continued.

The Mixtec, Zapotec, and Triqui Indigenous Peoples of Mexico

This background provides general cultural information, while recognizing that every family is unique and that cultural practices will vary by household and by generation. This summary is based on focus groups with Mixtec and Zapotec parents of young children and was produced in partnership with indigenous migrant community leaders and organizations and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs in California and Florida.

While this resource provides general information, it is best to get to know each family and learn their unique characteristics wherever possible, ask members of the community about different cultural practices.

Background

Mixtec, Zapotec, and Triqui indigenous peoples are very closely related historically and geographically. They share a common origin several thousand years ago and belong to the same language group (Oto-Manguean). These cultures had reached a high degree of civilization by the time the Spanish colonizers arrived in Mexico in the 1500s. After providing brief histories for each group, this background focuses on cultural themes and experiences common to all three groups.

Practice Tip:

It is important to note that, despite these similarities, each of these indigenous peoples represents a unique language, culture, and ancient history, of which they are justly proud.

Since the 1950s, there has been a steady migration of indigenous peoples from the Oaxaca area of Mexico to the United States, due to diminishing land, extreme poverty, and discrimination in their homeland. Many indigenous people become seasonal and migrant agricultural workers in the U.S., while some work in other industries and more are becoming highly educated professionals.

In recent years, rather than migrant families regularly returning to their homes in Mexico, many have begun to establish permanent communities in the United States. In 2011, about 150,000 indigenous people from Southeastern Mexico, mostly Mixtec, Zapotec and Triqui, lived in California, making up 20 percent of the agricultural labor force there. Other states with significant populations include New York, Florida, and U.S.-Mexico border cities, such as San Diego and Tucson. Recently, communities are becoming established in other states, such as North Carolina and Tennessee.



Office of Head Start National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness
<http://edc.hhs.gov/hsncc-system/cultural-linguistic>

OUR JOURNEY TO SUCCESS: Early Education for Children in Indigenous Migrant Families



For more information

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Center on Immigration and Child Welfare (CICW), University of Houston, Graduate College of Social Work

www.cimmcw.org

Center for Culturally Responsive Practice, Bank Street College of Education, NYC

<https://www.bankstreet.edu/pre-k-summer-institute/culturally-responsive-practice/>





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Thank you!